

St. John Vianney Parish Council Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2010

Members Present:

Fr. Ken Knippel, pastor
Fr. Phillip Bogacki, associate pastor
Doug Miller, trustee secretary
Greg Van Winkle, trustee treasurer
Mike Cekanor, chair
Cheryl Zima, vice chair
Pat Butler, secretary
Paul Mindel, Human Concerns liaison
Larry Francione, School Board liaison
Kurt Baumann, Stewardship liaison
Mike Ostrenga, Administrative Services/Finance liaison
Kathy Bell, Prayer and Worship liaison

New Members Discerned this Evening and starting July 1

Brad Niswonger, Stewardship liaison
Mary Lopez, Prayer and Worship liaison
Jon Hauser, Administrative Services/Finance liaison

New Member Discerned this Evening and excused

Mariann Van Winkle, Christian Formation liaison

Guests:	Camille Fernandes	Jill Pasqua	Louise Boyle
	Christine Rudek	Kim Prudlow	Therese Stockhausen
	Cami Adel	Karla Cooney	Liz Doherty
	Paul Stockhausen		

Call to Order: Mike Cekanor, chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:00 p.m.

Review of Minutes:

The minutes from the May 10, 2010 meeting were approved.

Open Forum:

Since some parishioners were in attendance for open forum, Mike Cekanor went over some procedural guidelines. Guests for open forum are welcome to bring items to council for attention. It doesn't mean that the council will take immediate action on the item. It may be sent for review to a committee. We are interested in listening to input. In respect for the other agenda items we ask that speakers, to the extent possible, avoid a redundancy of viewpoints.

Therese Stockhausen spoke first: We're looking out for faith development of our children. In the Prayer and Worship meeting earlier this evening we were told there would be listening sessions regarding the planned changes for First Eucharist next year. We ask that the listening sessions be truly productive. We get the feeling that the decision will be unchanged. First Eucharist is very special. Why tamper with it?

Camille Fernandes spoke next: My child made First Eucharist this year. It was special being in their 2nd grade community. When ordained you have a special Mass and special music. The Catholic Church seems to be in a precarious place now. First Eucharist is an initiation—the children are becoming active participants in the Church. It should be a special ceremony. It was a big part of why we chose to come to SJV.

Kurt Baumann from Parish Council asked, "Where are we at on this issue?" Father Ken responded saying that in June 2009 the Prayer and Worship Committee discussed having First Eucharist during the Sunday Masses. There were some concerns with logistics. The decision was made at the Prayer and Worship's recommendation that the change to celebrate First Eucharist at the Sunday Masses would not be implemented until 2011. Letters were sent after First Eucharist this year to parents of 1st graders and that same letter was placed in the bulletin as an announcement to the entire parish. There was opposition to the changes even before the letter went out and misinformation was circulating. There is still dissatisfaction. Some parishioners met to sign petitions at Panera Bread. Father Ken has had meetings with three concerned families. The concern over the changes has escalated and become a hot button and emotional issue. It appears to have grown into a broader issue around parish life, pastoring style and decision making style. Father Ken is surprised by the negativity. He observes that we are at an impasse. It requires outside intervention. Father Ken will ask for someone from the archdiocese to come to facilitate a listening session. He said that perhaps he should have had a listening session before Prayer & Worship made their decision. He stated that he likes to be consultative but that doesn't mean surveying everyone all the time. He stated that he hears emotions and concerns. He doesn't know if his points are understood. He hears that he has not been listening. Listening doesn't mean changing your mind. Prayer & Worship had honest discussion. The decision to integrate First Communion with our Sunday celebrations should stand but possibly with some adjustments or compromises as a result of the listening sessions. There are liturgical reasons for the change. Sunday assembly is key. Post Vatican II, some practices at some parishes took change too far by not putting emphasis on the right things. Some would have each First Communicant take on a ministry role at First Eucharist. People got wrapped up in making sure every child was represented and focused on who wore what and

honoring the kids. The emphasis should be on their joining us at table. When receiving a sacrament, you should be ministered to. In 1996 the archdiocese put out some guidelines that encourage that First Eucharist be celebrated in the parish community at the Sunday Masses. Since the decision to follow the guideline from the archdiocese, Father Ken said he's had support from some as well as the request to overturn the decision from others.

Camille Fernandes indicated that we are not a group of people who want to take apart the parish.

Father Ken reiterated his intention to ask for advice at the archdiocese this Thursday about getting a facilitator for the listening sessions. We want to be a community working together. He indicated he was blindsided by the reaction to the decision. He didn't expect the decision to cause such a fury. It is not productive. I'm reacting and you're reacting. Better to listen and say, "What can we do to make this a great celebration?"

Mike Ostrenga asked if the listening session would be an arbitration.

Father Ken indicated he would ask for the wisdom of the archdiocese.

Liz Doherty indicated that the parish has always been welcome to come to the Saturday First Eucharist Masses; everyone is welcome. If the addition of an associate pastor makes it possible to integrate it into regular Sunday Masses; the same is true with having parish priest coverage for the Saturday Masses. She just asks that the listening sessions be productive. Father Ken had said that the decision would not be changed. We want it to be an open mediation. Forum attendees asked that the outcome of the listening sessions be explained with objectives identified.

Open forum ended and the guests left.

Pastor's Report:

Father Ken shared his concerns with the First Eucharist issue. It has consumed a lot of his time. It has been hurtful—the meetings at Panera, the criticism of his pastoring. It started with emails and there seemed to be a disconnect. Two parents came in to see him and Fr. Phillip personally and it seemed to have resolved some of the issues. The next thing Father Ken knew people were meeting at Panera and signing petitions. Father Ken made himself available. "No one who wanted to see me was turned away."

Paul Mindel suggested that it might be a good idea to consider allowing the First Eucharist Mass to be held on Saturday in 2011 and a decision for future years to be made after the listening sessions. Father Ken indicated the decision has been made. Should we change decisions because people don't like it?

Greg Van Winkle suggested that Father Ken might consider getting input from leaders and trustees before making these kinds of decisions as it could be easier on him.

Father Ken said that part of the problem is a difference in understanding Church as opposed to some other forms of governance and leadership like a democracy.

Greg Van Winkle stated that the Prayer & Worship Committee was restarted by Father Ken and the perception from some is that the committee was restarted to be a puppet.

Father Ken indicated that he was recently at an interdenominational meeting and other religious leaders said that they observed a shift in culture whereby people now feel free to criticize authority a la some talk radio shows and the like. People today may have a skeptical view of authority in general that is then transferred into their faith communities.

On other issues Fr. Ken said that the parish festival this past weekend was very successful. Father mentioned that there are many things working very well at the parish and seeing parishioners come together in this very successful event shows that. The gross revenues this year were around \$233K with net expected to be in the \$95-100k range—maybe even as high as \$110k.

We had a wonderful parish planning session in May. Many work for the good of the parish.

John Mitchell is a wonderful addition as our priest intern this summer. He was at his first staff meeting and the First Eucharist issue was covered there so he's learning quickly.

Pam Pyzyk is a perfect choice for our new principal. The search committee did a very professional job. Fr. Ken indicated that he has heard from some that doubt has been cast about the hiring process and her choice through the spread of false rumors. He asked us to dispel all such rumors.

Faith In Our Future—there was a final event at the Cathedral on Pentecost. Donations will still come in for the next two years. At the parish we had a blessing of the Christian Formation center on that date.

Review of Strategic Plan Status

Kurt Baumann, head of the Parish Planning Committee, reported that the May 19 session went well. It was attended by 40+ committee members. Every committee is working on this. It is important that we keep in touch. We need more interaction. Drafts from the committees are due September 1 and should be turned into the Parish Council Vice Chair. It will be reviewed at the Parish Council meeting on September 13. The strategic plan should be finalized in late September or October. Mike Ostrenga provided a resource and template. Committee liaisons need to take initiative to drive the development of their portion of the plan. This would include a brief summary of goals and initiatives to support the goal. Definitional work is due—that will be done if they complete the template.

Charter for Communications Sub-Committee

As part of the strategic plan, the #1 Objective is *Be characterized as a vibrant, welcoming community engaged in worship, ministries and outreach* and that is made up of five distinct goals. One of these goals is entitled, *Develop an effective communication strategy including internal communications and external marketing*. The Parish Council has taken on ownership of that goal. Mike Ostrenga asked for a councilor who would be willing to lead the Communications

Sub-Committee, an ad hoc committee that is being formed. It would make sense for a committee liaison member to take that on. No one stepped forward. The role could be scaled back to taking the initiative to reach out to some parishioners to get it started—Kathy Uy and Tim Rippinger were suggested as potential competent leaders of the Communication Sub-Committee. Mike Ostrenga was willing to contact Kathy and Tim regarding a possible leadership position on the Communications Sub-Committee. Kathy Uy may know of parishioners who have the communications and marketing experience to contribute to these efforts. A document was reviewed that goes over the scope of the Communications Sub-committee, and outlined a work activity approach. It would make sense to do an assessment of current state, develop key activities, responsibilities, time line, and possibly benchmark what other parishes are doing. Look at options beyond what we are doing now such as use of social media. Then develop recommendations and identify deliverables by January 2011. Then January to June 2011 would be spent in design and implementation.

Review of Goals of Parish Council 2009-2010 and Establishment of Parish Council Goals 2010-2011

A quick list of what was accomplished in 2009-2010 was reviewed.

2010-2011 Parish Council Goals are:

- Integration with/engagement of subcommittees with standing committees
- Completion of Strategic Plan including documented process for continual updating
- Development and implementation of the Communications Sub-Committee
- Provide greater visibility and engagement in the Committee discernment process
- Be prepared to respond to Archdiocese Vision XXI pastoral plan

The last has not come into being due to the archbishop position being vacant so long. It may be prudent to move this to a sub point in the strategic plan.

Cheryl Zima said that she hopes to hardwire stuff so we don't lose it. Integrating the subcommittees more should help with that. Bringing the strategic plan to life, having documented processes to keep it alive so it becomes the living fabric of the parish. Discernments went thru the full cycle this year, but it is not hard wired. Need to get more people involved. Often there were just enough people to fill spots so real discernment was not really done. People felt they had to accept the role because there was not another person available.

Liaison Committee Reports

Most of the liaison reports were presented at the common leadership meeting. Some supplementary info was offered:

Administrative Services/Finance—Mike Ostrenga updated us on the Bids for Kids accounting. A proposal was presented to the archdiocese. The archdiocese informed us it was against policy

to mix cash and accrual accounting. Our solution is to footnote the financials showing the amount of Bids for Kids revenue that has been consumed by expenditures. This will allow us to mentally reduce our bottom line by the unconsumed amount to get a more realistic view of our financial position.

School Board—Larry Francione said they need to keep track of enrollment. There has been an increase in job transfers and people may be moving, thereby negatively impacting school enrollment.

Stewardship—The new mission statement has not been in the weekly bulletin on a consistent basis. The use of some of its key words for the stewardship theme this year should help reinforce it. Faith—experiencing, living, serving.

New Business

No new business.

Next Meeting: August 23, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. apart from CLN

Respectfully Submitted,

Pat Butler